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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/672,370	09/25/2003	Laurence E. Dahners	421/75/2	3033
25297 7590 01/22/2009 JENKINS, WILSON, TAYLOR & HUNT, P. A. Suite 1200 UNIVERSITY TOWER 3100 TOWER BLVD., DURHAM, NC 27707				
EXAMINER				
SWIGER III, JAMES L				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3775				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
01/22/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/672,370

Applicant(s)

DAHNER, LAURENCE E.

Examiner

JAMES L. SWIGER III

Art Unit

3775

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 October 2008.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/5508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

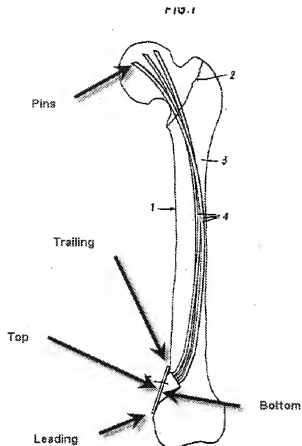
Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 6-16, 18-22, and 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ender (US Patent 4,467,793). Ender discloses a longitudinally extending plate (5) made of resilient material comprising a surface at one end having a top and bottom and leading and trailing end that is sized to overlay a fracture site, and further has a longitudinally extending body element integral with the plate element (see drawing below) and is further considered adjacent but spaced apart from the trailing end of the surface of the plate element and has apertures (6).



The overhanging heel portion is adjacent to the trailing end and extends downwardly below the location at which the resilient body element is integral to the surface of the plate element. The heel serves to assist stabilize the fracture site. It is capable of preventing over-reduction. The intrafocal plate also has a body element (4) which extends down and outward from the bottom of the surface (see drawing) and further has a pin element (see drawing above). The body elements connects at a location that is between the leading end and trailing end. The intrafocal plate further has a shoulder at the juncture of the body element and surface and further defines an

acute angle (adjacent to the trailing end portion in the drawing above). The body element is considered sinuous, as it is windy and curved.

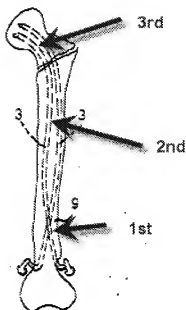
Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ender (US Patent 4,467,793) in view of Tornier (US Patent 4,483,335). Ender discloses the claimed invention except for a plate including one or more screws. Tornier discloses a plate system that has a screw (9) for insertion of the apertures defined in the plate. The screw assists in affixing the plate to the fracture site. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the device of Ender having at least one or more screws in view of Tornier to better affix the plate to the fracture site.

Claims 23-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ender '793 in view of Firica et al. (US Patent 5,013,314). Ender discloses the claimed invention except for a body element having three distinct sections curving in different directions, towards and away from the plate. Firica et al. disclose a plate system having a body element that has a first portion curving away from the plate portion, a second portion curving toward the plate section and a third portion curving toward the plate element. See drawing below.



It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the device of Ender having a body element with multiple curved sections in view of Firica et al. so that the body section can have an improved grip with respect to the fracture site and have improved healing and stabilization.

Response to Arguments

Submission of the Terminal disclaimer appended to the EXHIBIT A in applicant's revival petition submitted on 3/18/2008 is acknowledged.

Applicant's arguments submitted 10/30/2008 with respect to claims 1-26 have been considered but are not persuasive. It is held that the claimed invention still reads on the prior art of record. Ender has an intrafocal plate system that has at least a top,

bottom, leading and trailing end with a body element integral. It is noted that Ender has the claimed structural limitations; the device is functionally capable of overlapping a fracture site. Applicant is reminded that with regards the statements of intended use and other functional statements, they do not impose any structural limitations on the claims distinguishable over Ender which is capable of being used as claimed if one so desires to do so. *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Furthermore, the law of anticipation does not require that the reference "teach" what the subject patent teaches, but rather it is only necessary that the claims under attack "read on" something in the reference. *Kalman v. Kimberly Clark Corp.*, 218 USPQ 781 (CCPA 1983). Furthermore, the manner in which a device is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structural limitations. *Ex parte Masham*, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (1987).

It is additionally noted that the term integral may be defined as "consisting or composed of parts that together constitute a whole." The 'insert member' is considered as a *whole*, having the structural limitations as listed above. It may be used to overlay a fracture site if one chooses to do so.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES L. SWIGER III whose telephone number is (571)272-5557. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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/JAMES L SWIGER/
Examiner, Art Unit 3775

/Eduardo C. Robert/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733